

Claims:

1. An automatic library device for storing a plurality of cartridge-type data storage devices, each having a casing (100) containing a high capacity data storage medium, and having a programmable memory device (101) attached to said casing, said programmable memory device storing data describing said data storage device, said library device comprising:

a rack storage means (201) having a plurality of receptacles for storing said plurality of said data storage devices;

an automatic selection means (202) operable to select, retrieve and replace said data storage devices from said rack; and

a reader device (200) capable of reading a data content stored on a said programmable memory device, wherein said selection means is configured to present a said data storage device to said reader device, said reader device being configured to read data signals from said programmable memory device (101) of said data storage device and print said read data onto a print medium.

2. The library device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said reader device (200) comprises a port configured to accept said cartridge-type data storage device, and a printer device located in said port, said printer configured to print directly to said data storage device when said data storage device is inserted in said port.

3. The library device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said reader device (200) comprises:

a receiver means capable of receiving data signals from a said programmable memory of a said data storage device; and

an interface means, arranged for interfacing with a processor for communicating said data signals to an external processor device.

- 5 4. The library device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said reader device comprises:

an interface means, arranged for interfacing with a processor for communicating said data signals to an external processor device, such that inspection of information contained in data read from said programmable memory device of said data storage device can be accessed on said external processor device via said interface.

- 15 5. The library device as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

a read only memory means storing an operating system or operating a processor to display said data items received from said received means; and

20 a display device (302) arranged to display said data items read from said programmable memory device.

- 25 6. The library device as claimed in claim 1, further comprising means for emitting a power signal to said data storage device, said power signal emitting means located in close proximity to said cartridge port, for supply of power to said programmable memory device.

- 30 7. A method of labelling a data storage device with information stored on a programmable memory device (101) positioned externally on a casing (100) of said data storage device, said method comprising the steps of:

placing said data storage device in a port of a reader device capable of reading data signals describing a data content stored on said programmable memory device (101) of said data storage device;

5 polling a detector device (401) located in said port of said reader device for detecting said signals;

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10 receiving from said programmable memory device (101) data signals describing a predetermined stored set of parameters concerning said data storage device;

storing said data signals in a memory device of said reader device; and

15 printing (415) a predetermined set of data items describing a predetermined stored set of parameters concerning said data storage device, on an area having a size and shape which fits on said data storage device.

20 8. The method as claimed in claim 7, wherein said step (415) of printing comprises printing on a label of a size and shape suitable for direct attachment to said data storage device.

25 9. The method as claimed in claim 7, wherein said step (415) of printing comprises printing said data items directly onto a cartridge of said data storage device.